

Private Members' Business

Criminal Code and updating our law so that it reflects what society condones and what it will not tolerate.

Every form of violence should be exterminated like vermin. The Minister of Justice should not wait any longer to complete the reform of the general part of the Criminal Code. The rules of criminal law are archaic and many of its fundamental principles are not included in the general part, as they were developed by the courts.

Precedents shape the law. It is high time for roles to be reversed and for lawmakers to act responsibly. The Barreau du Québec quite rightly expressed serious concerns about Bill C-72.

In its brief to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, it suggests a global approach to penal law. Here is what it said in unequivocal terms. "The Barreau du Québec wishes to emphasize that, far from eliminating the confusion which surrounds the concepts applying to criminal law, the proposed legislation creates even greater confusion. The urgency is of a political nature and is the direct result of the treatment, by the media, of the Daviault case. This certainly confirms the need to look at the issue, but we must do so in the appropriate general context".

• (1740)

Other groups showed less tolerance toward Bill C-72. The Criminal Lawyers Association called the legislation "premature". These criminal lawyers feel that the bill violates the charter of rights and freedoms. They deplore the attitude of the Minister of Justice, who is providing a political solution to a legal issue. These criminal lawyers also feel that the premises of the preamble are flawed and are too open to interpretation.

Without necessarily agreeing with these groups, I do see a common denominator, namely the need to reform our criminal law, particularly the Criminal Code. Using a piecemeal approach or merely patching things up only leads to inconsistent legislation and absurd precedents.

We need a comprehensive review, as Superior Court Justice Réjean Paul said:

"It has already been quite a while since the Law Reform Commission of Canada suggested to Parliament that it should undertake major changes regarding substantive law and criminal procedure, so as to be able to deal with contemporary issues. It is necessary to adopt a new Criminal Code, as well as a new Code of procedure. In Canada, we are still using a working tool that dates back to the previous century, was reworked in 1927 and 1952, and patched up several times since to deal with new political, economic or social realities".

The chaotic situation prevailing in our criminal law system could not be better summed up. Therefore, I exhort the Minister of Justice to stop grandstanding and to propose an overhaul in September. Criminal law needs a steady hand at the helm, someone capable of keeping on course, not someone who will be dragged along in the wake of the courts.

In closing, I would like to wish all of my colleagues a pleasant end of session; we all know that the last sprint is difficult. I wish you all a good summer and above all, a happy national holiday, Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day, to all Quebecers. May we proudly celebrate the joy that comes with belonging to a people who will soon, very soon, take charge of their own affairs and create a country of their own.

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): It being 5.43 p.m. the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed in today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

NATIONAL GRANDPARENTS DAY

Mrs. Daphne Jennings (Mission—Coquitlam, Ref.) moved that Bill C-259, an act respecting a national grandparent's day, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Mr. Speaker, in today's times the family seems to be under constant attack and so it is that those of us who are chosen to represent Canadians and make decisions for Canadians must also protect the Canadian way of life.

The family is the basic unit for all society, yet it seems to have its adversaries, those who seem intent on belittling the importance of family in today's world. I am sorry to hear from those who do not respect the family for it is our heritage. It is mankind's heritage and mankind must protect it if the world is to remain strong.

From strong families we have strong communities. From strong communities we have strong provinces or states, and from strong provinces and states we have strong countries. One unit builds upon the other.

Why is it so important to remain respectful of the family unit? When we are born, each of us learns from our parents. We are taught who we are and learn the values of living within a family, of treating each other with love and respect.

Our future behaviour, one of being responsible, carrying one's weight and respecting others and our way of life begins in a family setting. Later, as we continue to grow and get an education, our relationships with others and our treatment of others reflect our early family teachings. We are what we are taught. We are what we experience.

If we are part of the working world and go into business, our business reflects our attitudes. If we take a position in the workforce our treatment of others and our ability to work with